

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-18

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FM AMEMBASSY DAKAR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7619

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BANJUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAKAR 3800

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SG

SUBJ: FORMATION OF SECOND POLITICAL PARTY

SUMMARY. ON 26 JUNE, MINISTER OF INFORMATION DAOUDA SOW CONFIRMED IN HIS WEEKLY PRESS CONFERENCE THAT "M. ABDOULAYE WADE RECENTLY MET THE CHIEF OF STATE AT MOGADISCIO DURING THE 11TH SUMMIT OF THE OAU WHERE IT WAS AGREED THAT HE COULD FORM A POLITICAL PARTY." END SUMMARY.

1. SOW SAID THAT SENEGALESE CONSTITUTION PERMITTED EXISTENCE OF MANY POLITICAL PARTIES. THERE WOULD BE NO REASON TO BLOCK FORMATION OF NEW PARTY AS LONG AS ITS OBJECTIVES RESPONDED TO INTERESTS OF NATION AND IT WAS NOT IN FIEF TO FOREIGN INTERESTS. SENGHOR AND SOW HAVE REFERRED TO A PARTY MEETING THESE CRITERIA AS "UN PARTI DE CONTRIBUTION." (BY IMPLICATION EASILY DISTINGUISHABLE FROM UN PUJTI D'OPPOSITION).

2. IN WEEK FOLLOWING SOW'S PRESS CONFERENCE, SENEGALESE WEEKLY PRESS, L'OUEST AFRICAIN AND AFRIQUE NOUVELLE HAVE BOTH RUN ARTICLES GUARDEDLY DISCUSSING MERITS OF MULTI-
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PARTY SYSTEM. LATEST ISSUE L'QUEST AFRICAIN ALSO HAS

EDITORIAL PRAISING SENGHOR AS CHIEF OF STATE WHO WILL HELP ESTABLISH PRACTICAL RULES WHICH SHOULD PROGRESSIVELY LEAD PEOPLE TO PRACTICE DEMOCRACY AND PREVENT ANY USURPATION OF POWER.

3. ABDOULAYE WADE IS CURRENTLY PRACTICING LAW IN SENEGAL. HE WAS FORMALLY PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS AT UNIVERSITY OF DAKAR. HE HAS MANY CONTACTS IN UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY AND AMONG CIVIL SERVANTS MANY OF WHOM HE HAS TAUGHT BUT IS LITTLE KNOWN OUTSIDE THOSE CIRCLES. HE HAS LONG HAD POLITICAL AMBITIONS AND BEEN ON FRINGE OF POLITICS IN SENEGAL. ALTHOUGH WADE HAS LONG ESPOUSED NATIONALIST ECONOMIC DOCTRINES, HIS POLITICAL STANCE MIGHT BEST BE CHARACTERIZED AS PRAGMATIC OPPORTUNISM. IT IS RUMORED THAT CHEIKH FALL, THE EX-PRESIDENT DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF AIR AFRIQUE, MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH WADE'S CURRENT EFFORT TO FORM A POLITICAL PARTY.

4. NEITHER WADE NOR SENEGALESE PRESS WOULD BE DISCUSSING SECOND POLITICAL PARTY WITHOUT EXPRESS APPROVAL OF SENGHOR. SOURCES IN SENEGALESE PRESS TEND BELIEVE SENGHOR HIMSELF HAS STIMULATED WADE UNDERTAKE TO FORM SECOND PARTY. SAME SOURCES SKEPTICAL RE BREADTH OF WADE'S POLITICAL FOLLOWING AND THINK WHOLE EXERCISE MAY BE DESIGNED AS PRETEXT FOR BRINGING WADE INTO GOVERNMENT. AS QUID PRO QUO, NEW PARTY WOULD EVENTUALLY FUSE WITH UPS PROVING ONCE AGAIN UPS OPENNESS AND BROAD APPEAL. AT THIS POINT HARD TO UNDERSTAND PRECISELY HOW THIS MAY RELATE TO BROADER QUESTION OF BRINGING DIAISTS INTO GOVERNMENT AT FUTURE STAGE BUT RELATIONSHIP PROBABLY THERE. THIS LOOKS LIKE ANOTHER STRAW IN THE WIND WHICH PROMISES POLITICAL CHANGE ON DOMESTIC SCENE IN COMING YEAR.
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